

AMENDMENTS

In the Specification:

On Page 2, beginning Line 24, please substitute the paragraph with the following:

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The baffle plate has the function of holding the reaction product made by the process, thus reducing the amount in which the reaction product flows into the exhaust passage. The reaction product deposits on that surface of the baffle plate which is exposed to the process chamber (i.e., the surface of the plate facing the chamber). The amount of deposition is proportional to the time of process. If the product deposits on the rims of the slits through which the gas flows from the process chamber, the slits will become narrower. Consequently, the pressure in the process chamber will rise. This impairs the uniformity of etching in the plane of the object (i.e., in-plane uniformity) or decrease the etching rate. To prevent such undesirable events, the maintenance of the baffle plate is effected at regular intervals, by either washing the plate or by replacing it with a new one. If the process generates deposit in large quantities, however, the maintenance must be carried out more frequently. In this case, the throughput of the process will decrease.

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